



Secretariat

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5 February 1997

INFORMATION CIRCULAR

To: Members of the staff

From: The Under-Secretary-General for Administration and Management

Subject: DECISION TAKEN BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY ON
HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT ISSUES

1. At its 89th plenary meeting, on 18 December 1996, the General Assembly decided to defer consideration of the item entitled "Human resources management" to the first part of its resumed fifty-first session. Pending that consideration, and on an interim basis, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General:

(a) To review the need for the general recruitment freeze and to oversee and monitor all recruitments, appointments, placements and promotions through the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat, taking into account the need to recruit from unrepresented and under-represented Member States and to achieve gender balance;

(b) Not to expand arrangements that exist with regard to delegation of authority in recruitment, appointment, placement and promotion matters;

(c) To limit short-term appointments against regular budget posts to temporary replacements in case of mission service and leave;

(d) To limit exceptions from regular rules and procedures to the recruitment, appointment, placement and promotion of Under-Secretaries-General, Assistant Secretaries-General, Special Envoys at all levels and staff of the Executive Office of the Secretary-General;

(e) To continue not to convert fixed-term contracts into permanent contracts until the General Assembly has taken action on the relevant report;

(f) To report on all recruitment, appointment, placement and promotion activities after 1 November 1996 to the General Assembly at the first part of its resumed fifty-first session.

2. The Office of Human Resources Management has taken and will continue to take action within its authority to ensure that the interim requests of the General Assembly are satisfied.

3. The particular attention of heads of departments and offices is drawn to paragraph 1 (c) above, which requires that short-term appointments against regular budget posts be limited to temporary replacements in case of mission service and leave. The deliberations of the Fifth Committee indicate that the purpose of the request was to preclude recruitment and placement of staff on any type of appointment of less than one year against regular budget posts without review by the appointment and promotion bodies. Accordingly, and in order to comply with this request, the Office of Human Resources Management will take the following measures:

(a) No recruitment for periods of less than 12 months will be authorized against regular budget posts, except in cases of temporary replacement of staff on mission detail, or on long-term leave, including special leave for purposes of loan or secondment to another office or organization. When recruitment against a regular budget post is authorized under the preceding exception, the letter of appointment issued to the staff member will include a special condition indicating that the appointment is limited to replacement of another staff member who is temporarily absent;

(b) Staff now serving on a fixed-term appointment of less than one year who are placed against a regular budget post may be extended, provided the total period of continuous service is less than one year. No fresh appointment will be granted after a break in service;

(c) Staff now serving on any type of appointment of less than one year who are not placed against a regular budget post are not to be so placed unless they have been selected for such a post through regular recruitment procedures, including circulation of a vacancy announcement.

4. To the extent that heads of departments and offices have delegated authority to appoint staff in the General Service and related categories, and to appoint staff for a total period of less than one year in the Professional category and at the Principal Officer (D-1) level, they are expected to apply the same measures as those introduced above by the Office of Human Resources Management in order to implement the interim decision of the General Assembly. They are reminded that they are accountable to the Secretary-General in the discharge of their delegated authority, and that, as requested by the General Assembly in its interim decision, a full report will be made to the General Assembly on all recruitment, appointment, placement and promotion activities after 1 November 1996.
